

State of California zSystems Apprenticeship Program



Applicant FAQs

What is the zSystems Apprenticeship Program?

The zSystems Apprenticeship Program provides you with the instruction, training, and experience necessary to transfer or promote into a mainframe computing occupation within state service. It is supported by the State of California Government Operations Agency, SEIU Local 1000, American River College, and several participating departments, including CDT, DMV, EDD, and FTB. This apprenticeship program is comprised of on-the-job training and cohort-based classroom instruction. Upon entering the program, you will be moved from your current position into a training and development (“T&D”) assignment into an IT position within your department. The assignment will be designed to provide you training one of three occupations: Mainframe Systems Administrator, Application Development Specialist, or Software Engineer. You will also receive college instruction related to these occupations.

Where is the program offered?

The program is currently offered in Sacramento. Applicants must be willing to work in the Sacramento area during the term of the apprenticeship. Applicants outside the Sacramento area will be considered for the program, but must be willing to relocate to Sacramento at their own cost.

How frequently is it offered?

Though this is a pilot program at this time, the intent is to offer the program annually for cohorts of up to 30 apprentices.

Is the program available to employees in all departments?

Recruitment for this cohort is available to employees in participating departments which may vary from cohort to cohort. Current participating departments are the California Department of Technology, Department of Motor Vehicles, Employment Development Department, and Franchise Tax Board. The list of participating departments is anticipated to broaden as the program grows.

What is the JAC?

JAC stands for Joint Apprenticeship Committee, and it is the labor/management committee formed to establish and maintain the apprenticeship. It is comprised of an equal number of representatives from management and labor along with a representative from American River College, the local education agency.

Who pays for the classes?

Your school fees related to the apprenticeship are paid for by a California Apprenticeship Initiative Grant awarded to American River College in Sacramento.

Are there prerequisites?

No college prerequisites are required, however, applicants should be prepared to understand program coursework focusing on mainframe computing.

How long is the program?

The program will last between 18 months to two years depending on whether your T&D assignment is designed for a Mainframe Systems Administrator, Application Development Specialist, or Software Engineer occupation. However, you may be granted on-the-job credit for part of the assignment, allowing you to complete the program in less time. Apprentices are also required to commit to continue employment with the State of California for two years after program completion.

What is the time commitment of the program?

You will be expected to attend classes on your own time a couple of evenings per week during the term of your apprenticeship. However, you may also receive some paid time during the week for group study, tutoring and mentoring.

What is the curriculum?

The curriculum is based on the focus of the particular cohort, and typical curriculum amounts to approximately 10-15 college level units.

Do I have to leave my department?

No, you will remain in your current department.

What salary do I earn while in the apprenticeship?

You will be paid the same salary as you are paid in your current position, and will be eligible for Merit Salary Adjustments (MSA), General and Special Salary Increases, and Alternate Range movement as you would have otherwise been eligible. For example: If you are currently an Office Technician (OT) and are receiving the maximum salary of the OT classification, you will continue to receive the salary of the OT classification during the term of your apprenticeship. If you have not attained the maximum salary range of your current classification, you will be eligible to receive MSAs during the term of the apprenticeship until you reach the maximum salary range of the classification you held prior to beginning the apprenticeship.

Will I still be eligible to receive my pay differential?

You will still receive any pay differential for which you are eligible. However, many differentials will not apply in the T&D assignment (bilingual, call center, shift, R&R, etc.).

What happens after I complete the program?

After you complete the apprenticeship program, you will meet the minimum qualifications for an IT Associate classification within state service and will be eligible to apply for the exam. However, depending on your personal educational background and IT work experience, you may meet the minimum qualifications of a higher level IT classification.

Who is eligible to apply?

The apprenticeship is open to anyone working in a participating department who has permanent status in a classification represented by SEIU Local 1000. Applicants must be eligible to participate in their targeted T&D Assignment.

Where can I get more information?

Please visit <http://www.seiu1000.org/grow>.